

It is my belief that cannabis should not have been made illegal and all laws drafted regarding it's use contravene international human rights law.

The use of cannabis in medicine and religion predates recorded history. 'Kaneh bosem' from ancient Hebrew, the basis of Biblical holy anointing oil and used by Jesus Christ, became the Greek 'Kanabis' which was adopted into Latin as 'Cannabis' and has a local language name in every country on Earth. We in western cultures often only relate the Rastafarian religion to Sacramental use of cannabis but as it was used by 'the anointed one', or 'Christ', it was also used by Jews, Taoists, Hindus, Shintoists, Buddhists, Muslims, and the healers and shamen of isolated groups worldwide. Cannabis is an active part of modern religious life and yet, in direct contravention to it's own discrimination laws, governments of the EU continue to persecute it's users. Practices such as these should not be seen to continue in the anti sectarian, multi-faith, society that we hope to build in Europe.

The advocates of cannabis prohibition continue to claim reasons of 'no medicinal use' and 'harmful to public health' to defend this unjust mistake. People throughout Europe however are daily using cannabis to treat Multiple Sclerosis, AIDS, Cancer, Brain Tumours, Glaucoma, Stroke, Nausea, Asthma, Epilepsy, Insomnia, Depression, Chronic Pain, and Migraine. New medical studies seem to appear weekly confirming the claims of those who rely upon cannabis as a medical necessity. The many harmful side effects of prescription drugs governments and health authorities deem acceptable, yet the pleasant euphoria experienced when using cannabis is not. By preventing normally law abiding, hard working, men and women from using this herb the governments of the European Union are guilty of an act of torture upon it's own citizens.

The irate rantings of a lone Egyptian, angered that cannabis users in his country were being disrespectful to the ruling class, first brought the seeds of prohibition to Europe but the USA holds it in place. HJ Anslinger, Director of the US Federal Bureau of Narcotics, openly misled the Congress of the United States to achieve a personal agenda that historians have labeled misguided at best and is popularly believed to be a corrupt collaboration between Anslinger, Randolph Hearst, and Du Pont. The newspaper, and timber, magnate, Hearst, published a campaign of anti-'marijuana' propaganda, often penned by himself and Anslinger, based on unacceptable racial intolerance and outlandish medical claims. These articles claimed that one joint of cannabis could cause "insanity, criminality, and death" and made people of "degenerate races" "believe they are equal to white men". In evidence given to a hearing of the US Senate in 1937 Anslinger stated,

"There are 100,000 total marijuana smokers in the US, and most are Negroes, Hispanics, Filipinos and entertainers. Their Satanic music, jazz and swing, result from marijuana usage. This marijuana causes white women to seek sexual relations with Negroes, entertainers and any others."

"... the primary reason to outlaw marijuana is its effect on the degenerate races."

"Marihuana is an addictive drug which produces in its users insanity, criminality, and death."

"You smoke a joint and you're likely to kill your brother."

"marijuana is the most violence-causing drug in the history of mankind."

These statements have been available to the governments of Europe for many years yet the citizens see no action taken to rectify this injustice. The fact that such discriminatory and unfounded laws as the prohibition of cannabis can remain on our statute books in the twenty-first century is a barrier to the future harmony of Europe which needs to be dismantled.

Recently we have seen modern examples of the 'reefer madness' stories once again being used to promote personal political agendas. What the majority of the mainstream media fail to put in banner headlines are the quotes from the authors of the reports being used as a base for these stories. Dr Ferguson, head of the New Zealand study, which showed a link between the heavy use of cannabis and mental disturbance, said "the same results would occur in (testing for) milk". Prof Van Os, of the Dutch report, said "the results effect such a small number of people it should never be used to guide legislation". Van Os openly states prohibition does not work. Yet certain politicians and sections of the media take anecdotal studies that suggest cannabis may be one of many thousands of things that may trigger mental illness in someone already predisposed to that illness, and broadcast it to the public as 'cannabis drives you mad'. Can anyone see a slight discrepancy between headline and fact here?

Our representatives can no longer ignore the wishes of the growing number of cannabis users while allowing far more dangerous drugs, such as tobacco which kills over 50,000 people each year in the UK, and alcohol which kills over 30,000, to be sold openly. These politicians are not concerned in the health of the public but only about the profits of the multinationals that provide 'seats on the board' in their retirement and donate so generously to party funds. These politicians do not represent the majority view of the citizens of the United Kingdom.

If you want to protect your children, legalise cannabis, and all drugs. Under prohibition the minimum legal age to buy drugs is £10.